[7th February 1924

Cabinet.

The issue of a Whip on the 'No-confidence' motion.

178 *Q.*—Mr. S. Satyamurti : Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether his attention has been drawn to a letter of Mr. S. Muttayya Mudaliyar, M.L.C., appearing in the 'Swarajya' of the 22nd December 1923 and referring to a Whip issued by the hon. the Raja of Panagal with regard to the 'No-confidence' motion;

(*b*) whether he knew of that Whip, dated the 21st November 1923, on the 27th November 1923, when he answered my Oral question in the Council; and

(*c*) whether the hon. the Raja of Panagal in issuing the said Whip had consulted any or all of his Colleagues in the Cabinet?

A.—(*a*) It has now been drawn to it.

(*b*) The answer is in the negative. I was asked to dispense with notice and reply immediately to a question relating to action taken in the Home Department. I took it that what the hon. Member had in view was a telegram issued by the Labour Commissioner at the instance of the Secretary to the Council to certain of the nominated members who represent the depressed classes, and having ascertained that that telegram could not possibly bear the complexion of a Government Whip, I gave the answer that I did.

(*c*) The Government consider that details of consultations between the Members that compose it should be treated as secret. They cannot therefore answer this question.

Discussions in the Cabinet.

179 *Q.*—Mr. S. Satyamurti : Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased—

(*a*) to lay on the table a statement showing the portfolios held and administered by the seven Members of the Cabinet; and

to state—

(*b*) whether all subjects are discussed at full meetings of the Cabinet, and

(*c*) whether the Members of the Executive Council and the Ministers meet separately for the discussion and decision of questions relating to the Reserved and Transferred departments respectively?

A.—(*a*) The hon. Member is referred to the answer to question No. 61.

(*b*) & (*c*) The procedure in respect of the transaction of business in his Executive Council and with his Ministers is regulated by His Excellency the Governor. The Government do not think it desirable to disclose the details of the procedure followed or of the part taken by particular Members of the Government in the transaction of any particular business.

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Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—" With regard to (b) and (c) of the answer, I am sure the hon. the Leader of the House will agree with me when I say that more than once His Excellency as well as Members of his Government have officially referred to the fact that joint consultation was a feature of the Madras Government and even prided themselves that, so far as that feature went, Madras was an improvement over the other presidencies. Such declarations having been publicly made, what is the good of my hon. Friend, the Leader of the House, now trying to take refuge under this plea of confidential matter? So I would request him to give us a candid answer as to firstly whether at the beginning joint consultations had been the rule or not, secondly whether such consultations have not been held in the same manner and to the same extent and thirdly whether, if any change had been brought about, it has been brought about by the initiation of the Local Government or under stress from the Government of India or the Right hon. the Secretary of State."

The hon. Sir CHARLES TODHUNTER :—" I have nothing to add, Sir, to the answer on the paper."

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—" Does the hon. the Leader of the House deny my statement that more than once in public the Head of the Administration as well as responsible Members of the Government had said that joint consultations were a special feature of the Government here and in so far as that feature went we were a great improvement over the other provinces? "

The hon. Sir CHARLES TODHUNTER :—" The answer, Sir, is in the negative."

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—" Then, are we not entitled, since the veil had been lifted so far, for complete publicity of the whole matter? If the thing had not at all been referred to, it would have been a different thing. But the thing having been to some extent revealed, are we not entitled to a complete revelation? "

The hon. Sir CHARLES TODHUNTER :—" The answer, Sir, is in the negative."

The issue of a Whip in connexion with the " No-confidence " motion.

180 Q.—Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI : Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the terms of the Whip issued by the hon. the Chief Minister and dated 21st November 1923 in connexion with the 'No-confidence' Address debated last November;

(b) whether he was aware of the existence of the Whip at the time he answered, on the 27th November, Mr. Satyamurti's question as to whether Government had issued any whip in the negative; and

(c) if he was not, whether he will be so good as to inform the House as to when the Chief Minister informed him of its existence?

A.—(a) My attention has been drawn to a letter published in the *Swarajya* by Mr. Muttayya Mudaliyar on the 22nd December 1923.

(b) I was unaware of the existence of the letter in question on the 27th November.

(c) The Government do not propose to make public private discussions between Members and Ministers.